

**Golden Apple Award
Dawn Edwards-Smith
Nov. 2, 2009**

In River City Academy's performance-based model of education, students are expected to be self-motivated to strive for excellence and continued improvement toward their goals. They have a first-class role model in teacher Dawn Edwards-Smith.

Principal Gregg Wilbanks said Dawn has been an essential part of the school's development and growth. She helped create the school's standards and rubrics, and she recently streamlined the entire mathematics content area to accommodate the new 7th- through 12th-grade configuration.

"Her work proved essential for the school to open on time and to be effective from day one. She is a role model for continuous improvement. In addition to her instructional methods, she continually improves upon the school's operation. She's not just an incredible asset to River City Academy, but for the entire KPBSD as more schools begin to take a serious look at our performance-based model," Wilbanks said.

Dawn also is a talented instructor. RCA secretary Rochelle Hanson said she is often drawn into Dawn's history classes and finds herself as enthralled as the students.

"Her history class draws and captivates me and any side observers into the time era she is currently instructing in. Her world history class has you walking, tasting and feeling the scorching sun in the Middle East. The realism of the current religious conflicts in Israel, Iraq and the Holy Land become up-close and real. The enthusiasm she has for bringing history to life is a spectacular gift," Hanson said.

Dawn also works effectively with her advisory class to provide service to the community. This includes the oral history project, which paired students with elders at the Soldotna Senior Citizens Center.

"Dawn is proactive in encouraging and motivating students to be self-disciplined and accountable for their own educational processes. The talents she possesses and are willing to share are refreshing and should be duly noted. Her infectious desire to instruct and teach ignites desires in all age groups. We need more teachers like Dawn that teach not for the sake of calling it a job, but teach because they love to learn and share that love with students."

We, the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education, are pleased to recognize Dawn Edwards-Smith for her enthusiastic dedication to students and the performance-based model of education.